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REPORT

OF A

CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO THE SOVIET UNION

MARCH 27-APRIL 4, 1986

TO THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 1986

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FOREWORD

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, August 22, 1986.

The following is a report of a congressional delegation to the Soviet Union March 27–April 4, 1986. The views expressed are those of the delegation and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Committee on Foreign Affairs or its members.

DANTE B. FASCELL,
Chairman.

WILLIAM S. BROOMFIELD,
Ranking Minority Member.

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INTRODUCTION

This report contains a general summary as well as an interpretive conclusion. The report also contains a general synthesis of the main discussions with Soviet leaders, particularly the meeting with General Secretary Gorbachev.

In addition to the main meetings, the delegation had ample opportunities to talk to many Americans serving in Moscow and Leningrad on behalf of the State Department, USIA, and the Department of Defense. They also took time to walk the streets, visit stores and markets, eat in Soviet restaurants, and attend Soviet cultural events.

Although the schedule was full, the number of meetings was reduced and restricted in order to have adequate time for open-ended, give-and-take discussion. The official meetings were also limited to the extent that meetings were held primarily with politicians and government officials who were of relatively equivalent rank and importance with the U.S. delegation.

SUMMARY

Hon. Dante B. Fascell, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and Hon. William S. Broomfield, ranking minority member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, visited the Soviet Union from March 27 to April 4 at the invitation of the chairmen of the Foreign Affairs Commissions of the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. The congressmen were accompanied by R. Spencer Oliver, chief counsel of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and Everett Bierman, minority staff director of the committee. This was the first visit to the U.S.S.R. by Mr. Fascell, whose 1976 request for a visa along with a delegation from the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe was denied by the Soviets. Mr. Broomfield had visited the Soviet Union once over 20 years earlier.

Chairman Fascell and Representative Broomfield accepted the invitation of respective chairmen of the foreign affairs commissions of the Supreme Soviet in order to pursue the opportunities for dialog and discussion between leaders of the U.S. Congress and the leaders of the Soviet Union.

In Moscow, the delegation met with General Secretary of the CPSU Mikhail Gorbachev for nearly 3 hours as well as with other leading officials including Minister of Finance Boris Gostev, Miniter of Foreign Trade Boris Aristov, Deputy Chairman of the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee Vadim Zagladin, Chief Editor of Izvestiya Ivan Laptev, Head of the U.S.A. and Canada Studies Institute Georgy Arbatov, Col. Gen. Nikolai Chervov of the Soviet Army, Deputy Minister of the Interior Vasiliy Trushin, Deputy Head of the International Relations Department of the CPSU CC Karen Brutents, and the Deputy Procurator General of the U.S.S.R. Viktor Naydenov.

In Leningrad, the delegation met with Alternate Politburo Member Yuriy Soloviev, First Secretary of the Leningrad Regional Committee of the CPSU, and with the Acting Mayor and Members of the City Council of Leningrad.

The meetings were substantive and businesslike and were characterized by a full and open exchange of views. The discussions, all of which were noteworthy for the absence of prepared statements and the opportunity for lengthy give and take, covered a wide range of subject areas, including arms control, human rights, trade, the Soviet economy, the new Soviet economic program, summitry, bilateral relations, and nuclear testing.

In addition to its official meetings, the delegation both in Moscow and Leningrad met with groups of Jewish refuseniks and with members of United States-Soviet divided families who have been refused permission to be reunited with their spouses in the United States. Chairman Fascell and Representative Broomfield presented Soviet officials with a list of 32 such cases which they requested be

favorably resolved. They also presented an extensive list of Soviet Jewish prisoners and imprisoned or exiled Helsinki group members. While they gave no firm commitments the Soviet authorities did agree to reconsider the cases raised by the delegation.

In every meeting with Soviet officials, the delegation raised the issue of Soviet noncompliance with the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and cited numerous examples of Soviet human rights abuses. In their meeting with General Secretary Gorbachev the delegation stressed the importance the Congress and the American people attach to these issues and the impact that Soviet human rights violations have on the overall United States-Soviet bilateral relationship.

The delegation also held several discussions with U.S. Ambassador Arthur Hartman and officials of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and toured the new embassy complex. Ambassador Hartman hosted a reception for the delegation at Spaso House which was attended by a wide variety of Soviet officials and ambassadors from other Western nations.

PREPARATION FOR THE TRIP

The delegation's trip was meticulously prepared. An advance team made up of chief counsel R. Spencer Oliver and staff consultant Martin Sletzinger traveled to Moscow March 13–17 to meet with officials of the Supreme Soviet, the Foreign Ministry, and the U.S. Embassy in order to determine the Codel's schedule and the officials with whom the delegation would meet. This marked the first time that the Foreign Affairs Committee had sent an advance team to Moscow to prepare a committee trip. The success of the team in establishing the basic guidelines and schedule of the Codel demonstrated that in trips of this nature, advance work is a good idea and should be employed again in the future.

In addition to the advance work, extensive briefing materials were prepared for the delegation by the staff of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Department of State, the Congressional Research Service, and other government agencies. The members of the Codel were personally briefed, prior to the trip, by Secretary of State Shultz and other officials of the State Department and received classified briefings on the full range of Soviet-related issues.

Immediately prior to his departure Chairman Fascell participated in a conference on United States-Soviet relations held annually at Arden House, under the joint auspices of the Harvard Russian Research Center and Columbia University's Harriman Russian Institute. The conference brought together many of the leading academic specialists in Soviet affairs, a number of Western businessmen who deal regularly with the Soviet Union, several Members of Congress, and leading U.S. officials with specific responsibility for Soviet affairs.

Finally, on its way to Moscow, the Codel stopped in Brussels, where it was briefed by U.S. Ambassador to NATO David Abshire and senior NATO Sovietologist and noted authority on Soviet domestic issues Murray Feshbach.

MEETINGS AT THE SUPREME SOVIET

As guests of the Supreme Soviet, the delegation's first meeting in the Soviet Union was held on March 28 with key members of the Supreme Soviet's International Affairs Commission, headed by Vadim Zagladin, the Secretary of this Commission, as well as Deputy Chief of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). A second meeting with Mr. Zagladin and Central Committee official Karen Brutents was held a few days later on April 1 after the delegation's weekend visit to Leningrad.

In addition to Zagladin, other important Soviet participants in the initial meeting included Georgi Arbatov, director of the Institute for the Study of the United States and Canada; Ivan Leptev, editor of Izvestiya; Vasily Trushin, First Deputy Minister of the Interior; Gen. Nicolai Chervov, Head of Administration of the Gen. Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, and other functionaries of the Supreme Soviet and the Central Committee.

Both meetings at the Supreme Soviet were marked by informal exchanges of views rather than formal, lengthy set statements, which facilitated the kind of wide-ranging, free discussion desired by the delegation. Discussion covered key issues including United States-Soviet relations, prospects for a summit, nuclear testing, and human rights.

During the talks, the Soviets repeatedly emphasized that the U.S.S.R. sought normal, stable relations with the United States. Mr. Zagladin, in particular, stressed that United States-Soviet summit meetings should take place and that there were no preconditions for the next summit. Arbatov and Chervov took more negative positions, lamenting that whenever United States-Soviet relations showed signs of improvement, "certain circles" sought to increase tensions, a problem which accounted for the recent decline in United States-Soviet relations. Chairman Fascell countered by emphasizing the need to replace the current practice of public statements, proposals, and criticisms—which he labeled "ping-pong diplomacy"—with serious, private diplomacy, particularly in the arms control area, and stressed the sincere U.S. intent in arms control. Both Mr. Fascell and Mr. Broomfield urged the rapid agreement on dates of the next United States-Soviet summit in Washington.

Representative Broomfield focused on the importance of verification for any acceptable arms control agreement and underlined that this issue would remain a subject of grave concern to the U.S. Congress. Chairman Fascell warned that the Soviets should not expect any major shift in U.S. thinking on the necessity of verification.

On the issue of nuclear testing, Chairman Fascell emphasized it was unrealistic to expect a sudden jump to a full, comprehensive

test ban. If there could be an agreement on verification and in the other areas such as INF and strategic reductions, he added, a different atmosphere could evolve on testing. A meeting of experts on verification without preconditions would be helpful. Mr. Zagladin agreed that such a meeting of experts could be beneficial to work out a common approach on verification, but doubted that such a step-by-step approach could ever lead to a nuclear ban.

Interestingly, the free give-and-take nature of the discussion brought out the existence of some tensions between Soviet political and military representatives at the meeting. Both Zagladin and Arbatov disagreed and even showed irritation with hard-line comments by General Chervov on the U.S. INF deployment decision, as well as on strategic nuclear issues.

Both Congressmen underscored the strong congressional interest in human rights and the negative influence this issue had on all aspects of United States-Soviet relations. They particularly emphasized and cited examples of Soviet noncompliance with the Helsinki Accords. Representatives Fascell and Broomfield formally requested to visit Nobel laureate Andrei Sakharov in exile in Gorky and then repeated this request in the April 1 meeting. The Soviets responded defensively along predictable lines. They pointed to statistics showing the large numbers of people (300,000) who had been granted permission to leave the U.S.S.R. since World War II for family reunification reasons and mentioned that by and large the issue of family reunification had been solved. Deputy Minister of the Interior Trushin, however, promised to give careful consideration to the lists of family reunification cases and political prisoners the delegation had formally submitted to the Supreme Soviet when it first arrived in the Soviet Union.

LENINGRAD

Between its two lengthy meetings at the Supreme Soviet, the delegation spent a long weekend visiting Leningrad March 29–31. In addition to touring the Hermitage and other notable sights in this beautiful and important former Czarist capital, the delegation laid a wreath of flowers at the Piskarevskoye Memorial Cemetery, the burial place of many thousands of the victims of the seige of Leningrad during World War II.

While in Leningrad, the delegation had a lengthy meeting with Yuri Soloviev, First Secretary of the Leningrad Oblast Party Committee and recently elevated to Candidate Member of the Politburo at the 27th CPSU Congress. Also present with Mr. Soloviev were other leading officials of the Leningrad city government and party organization. The delegation found Mr. Soloviev a capable and dynamic political figure, a man who presides over one of Europe's largest industrial, seafaring, and tourist cities. Soloviev gave the delegation a detailed description of Leningrad, its history, culture, economic and political structure, and current problems, and he outlined some of the reforms which are being considered to raise productivity, including increased authority and autonomy for plant managers. He openly praised General Secretary Gorbachev's reform efforts, noting that in many areas the problem could be identified as a matter of instilling more discipline and rationality in the workplace.

Chairman Fascell emphasized that it was important for him to meet with men like Mr. Soloviev since part of the purpose of the trip was to speak with successful Soviet politicians to get the full flavor of the Soviet political/governmental system and the men who run it. In this regard, he also raised the issue of human rights and the treatment of individuals which colored the manner in which the Soviet Union was viewed in the United States and impeded progress in trade and other areas. Specifically, he cited the case of the daughter of Lev Shapiro, an engineer in Leningrad and a Jewish refusenik, who has arbitrarily been denied permission to attend the special school for which she was qualified in every respect except apparently that she was Jewish and was a member of a family that had applied to emigrate. Soloviev, indicating that he was familiar with the case, assured the delegation he would look further into the matter.

While in Leningrad, the delegation met with a group of 11 Jewish refuseniks, including many whose family members are on the lists of divided family cases and political prisoners handed to the Supreme Soviet at the beginning of the trip.

OTHER MEETINGS IN MOSCOW

The Procurator's Office

Back in Moscow, on April 2 the delegation met for nearly 5 hours with Deputy Procurator General of the U.S.S.R. Viktor Naydenov, a meeting arranged for the specific purpose of discussing human rights. The meeting was unusual in that Naydenov discussed in detail the cases of refuseniks, divided families, political prisoners, Helsinki monitors and other human rights activists in whose welfare the Congress had previously expressed particular interest.

Chairman Fascell asked about Soviet procedures for pardon and early release of political prisoners and then raised the case of Sakharov, reiterating earlier requests to visit him on humanitarian grounds either in Moscow or in Gorky.

Naydenov gave the usual Soviet response on Sakharov, claiming he was well treated and had been led astray by Yelena Bonner. He promised to "consider" the request of the delegation to visit Sakharov, adding that he did not think that Sakharov had been sent to Gorky "permanently." Both Fascell and Broomfield explained the difficulty Americans have in understanding Soviet sensitivity to criticism, adding that progress in human rights would make it easier to advance in other problem areas.

After Representatives Fascell and Broomfield departed for a scheduled meeting with Soviet Foreign Trade Minister Aristov, Naydenov continued the meeting with chief counsel R. Spencer Oliver in order to discuss individual human rights cases on the lists presented earlier to the Supreme Soviet. It became clear that Naydenov had been well briefed on the details of each of the cases on the list and was prepared to discuss each in detail. For the remaining 3½ hours, Mr. Oliver then raised several individual cases with Naydenov responding in an informed, polite, yet noncommital, fashion. In making general comments on the cases on the Fascell-Broomfield list, Naydenov observed that of 26 emigration cases, 21 had been refused for security reasons, and only two had applied to go to the United States. Of the second category of political prisoners, 53 had been sentenced and must serve out their terms and could be released only through "normal" legal procedures. During the discussion Naydenov expressed puzzlement at the importance attached to human rights by the United States. He also demonstrated strong resentment on the issue of Soviet Jewry, claiming that Soviet Jews lived materially better than non-Jews; that Jews were better educated; that 40 percent of all Soviet scientists were Jews and that he had never heard of anyone being fired from his job for being Jewish. However, despite these sentiments, Naydenov repeated his assurances that the cases on the delegation's list would be reconsidered and, in parting, expressed his desire for

future cooperation in such cases, in line with better overall United States-Soviet relations.

Ministry of Foreign Trade

After meeting with the Deputy Procurator General, Representatives Fascell and Broomfield met with Minister of Foreign Trade Boris Aristov, a meeting which was marked by frank, direct discussion and a generally cordial atmosphere despite substantial areas of disagreement.

Chairman Fascell made a forceful presentation of U.S. concerns on Soviet emigration and on the political underpinnings of the Jackson-Vanik amendment and their relation to any improvement in bilateral trade. In general, Representative Fascell observed, the United States favored reducing barriers to trade and noted that there were clear legislative and administrative efforts to that end. Concerning trade with the Soviet Union, Fascell argued that political considerations had complicated trade issues and that improved relations overall, including increased emigration, would have a beneficial effect on bilateral trade. Fascell emphasized to Aristov that the sooner both sides stopped playing "political ping-pong" the quicker beneficial work could be done. One key political obstacle, Fascell stressed, arose, not from direct concerns of the Congress or the administration, but rather from the concerns of average citizens who were upset at the ways the Soviet system worked and its laws applied, and who were upset when close relatives in the Soviet Union failed to receive permission to emigrate.

In response, Aristov at first vigorously criticized the Jackson-Vanik amendment, offering the usual Soviet responses to the effect that the United States was trying to influence Soviet laws and practice and that U.S. trade practices vis-a-vis the Soviet Union were clearly discriminating. He then shifted gears and became more positive in tone, allowing that there had been "certain, but not significant" positive movement on the trade front. Aristov urged an "equal" regime to reflect mutual interest in trade.

Chairman Fascell assured Aristov that he would tell President Reagan of Minister Aristov's interest in equal trade treatment and contract sanctity in trade, but warned that politically we're a long way from getting anything decided despite significant efforts on the U.S. side to remove trade obstacles. Aristov concluded by noting that United States-Soviet trade contracts were "not bad", and that he was looking forward to cochairing, with Secretary of Commerce Baldrige, the forthcoming Intergovernmental Joint Commercial Commission.

Minister of Finance

Representatives Fascell and Broomfield met with Minister of Finance Boris Gostev on April 3 for 2 hours. The session focused on the new Soviet 5-Year Plan, current Soviet economic performance, plans for economic restructuring, and the budgetary process. Gostev in very businesslike, forthright fashion, elaborated certain current economic shortcomings in the Soviet system, acknowledging that the recent decline in hard currency oil revenue has led to a "troublesome" increase in short-term debt to the West. Such debt

is now in the $3–$4 billion range. Long-term debt is about $14 billion. Gostev also reaffirmed that defense spending for 1986—at 19 billion rubles—amounted to about 5 percent of the total state budget.

In elaborating on the objectives of the new 5-year plan Gostev admitted that behind the Soviet push for greater use of science and technology in industry is the long-term strategic objective to be first in the world in productivity, an admittedly ambitious goal. In this monumental effort, Gostev observed, there is room for both cooperation and competition with the United States.

In response to the delegation's questions on the Gorbachev-inspired ongoing changes in managing the Soviet economy, Gostev avoided any references to "radical reform," but relied on the more conservative formulation, "economic restructuring." In agriculture, he explained the new system under which the collective farms will be assigned targets to sell to the state with any surplus being left to the farm for disposal as it saw fit. A similar approach, according to Gostev, was being prepared for the industrial sector as well, using the experiment now underway at the Togliatti automobile plant as a prospective model. Under this reform model, the state would be assigned a definite share of the profits with surplus profit remaining with the firms or plants, either for profit-sharing or reinvestment.

Gostev was also refreshingly frank in his assessment of problems in the consumer sector. Overall he noted the quantity of goods in most consumer categories was more or less sufficient, with shops generally full. The problem was the shops were stocked with goods no one wanted to buy because they were of such inferior quality. Turning to the defense budget, Gostev also admitted, without polemics, that the 5-percent portion of the state budget allotted to defense was not comparable to the 24 percent of U.S. Federal budget devoted to defense expenditure, since the Soviet state budget included nearly 56,000 individual budgets encompassing the 15 Republic budgets, while the U.S. budget represented a much narrower base.

Overall, the delegation noted that Gostev, throughout the 2-hour meeting seemed determined to give a straightforward analysis of Soviet economic policy and not to let the discussion deteriorate into polemics, particularly on Soviet foreign economic policy. As a consequence, potentially divisive international economic issues such as the third-world debt problem were not treated in any detail.

Meeting With Divided Spouses

As in Leningrad, in Moscow the delegation met on April 2 with a group of about 26 U.S. citizens, divided spouses and divided family members whose names are included in the official U.S. Government representation list. Representatives Fascell and Broomfield reaffirmed to these anxious people the Congress' interest in and support of their humanitarian rights and promised to bring their cases to President Reagan's attention when they returned to Washington. Representative Broomfield, who represents the district in which Mr. Keith Braun resides, spoke at length during the meeting with his wife, Svetlana Braun. Following brief remarks by the Con-

gressmen, the meeting divided into informal groups for discussion of individual cases.

Meeting With General Secretary Gorbachev

Although it was the last scheduled meeting for the delegation, the clear highlight and centerpiece of the trip was the nearly 3-hour meeting held on April 4 with General Secretary Gorbachev. The meeting, held in the Kremlin, covered virtually every issue of mutual concern to the United States and the Soviet Union, including the arms race, comprehensive test ban treaty, the summit, verification problems, human rights and regional issues. No prepared statements were made and the discussion was marked by the same free-flowing, spontaneous exchanges that characterized the delegation's previous meetings during the visit.

The delegation found Gorbachev to be a dynamic, quick-witted, authoritative figure, a man with an easy smile and quip, but also a man who can pursue his arguments relentlessly; in short, a very impressive and formidable political figure and one who appeared to be in robust good health. Gorbachev was accompanied at the meeting by Lev Tolkunov, Chairman of the Council of the Union, the upper body of the Supreme Soviet, and Anatoly Chernayev, Mr. Gorbachev's personal foreign policy advisor. Following Soviet efforts to exclude all Americans from the meeting except the two Congressmen, it was finally agreed that the U.S. side would also consist of Arthur Hartman, U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, and R. Spencer Oliver, chief counsel of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

The Summit

Gorbachev opened by emphasizing the importance of regular meetings between the Soviet leadership and Members of Congress. The causes of the recent decline in such contacts, Gorbachev emphasized, should be analyzed. Representatives Fascell and Broomfield presented a personal letter to him that they had been given by President Reagan. Gorbachev had the interpreter read the letter on the spot and said that he shared the thoughts of the President as expressed in the letter. He emphasized that it was essential that the United States and the Soviet Union learn to live with each other's presence in the world and recalled that one of the most important results of the Geneva Summit had been the document declaring that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought and that neither side should seek military superiority.

Chairman Fascell countered that the main problem between the two countries centered around the question of trust and understanding and the removal of suspicion in our bilateral relations. The only way to deal with these problems is to talk about them, to be able to discuss and take action even on the most sensitive subject, including arms control, the treatment of Soviet citizens in violation of international human rights agreements and human rights in general. Representative Fascell emphasized, as he had earlier in the trip, that both sides should stop playing the sort of diplomatic ping pong they had been engaged in with public posturing statements and get down to serious talks. Gorbachev responded that he

thought such polemic exchanges had been stopped at the Geneva Summit, but that unfortunately both sides currently seemed to be moving away from the so-called spirit of Geneva.

On the question of another summit, Gorbachev clearly reaffirmed his position on the desirability of another summit and reconfirmed that his recent proposal inviting President Reagan to Europe for talks on a nuclear testing moratorium was by no means meant as a substitute for another summit nor as a precondition for it. While Gorbachev remained noncommital on the specific timing or location of the next summit, he left the clear impression that he considered another summit to be important and that there should be no specific preconditions to it. He did emphasize, however, that for another summit to be successful it had to take place in an appropriate atmosphere and it must deal in a serious way with important, substantive issues. Presently, he emphasized, it seemed as if the United States had been deliberately trying to poison the atmosphere by announcing reductions in the Soviet diplomatic mission to the United Nations, by "challenging our territorial waters," by the Black Sea maneuvers, and "engaging in provocations with Libya." Could he go to the United States, he asked, when he and his country were daily being denigrated by U.S. leaders and in the press? To this Representative Fascell retorted that the Soviets criticized the United States all the time and that he personally had been called everything in the book during his political career. You can't be in politics and let that sort of thing bother you, he concluded.

Representative Broomfield responded that President Reagan was himself very unhappy that no progress had been made since Geneva and registered U.S. dismay with what the Soviets were doing in Afghanistan and in human rights, specifically regarding the treatment of Andrei Sakharov. What further concerned the American Government and the Congress was the perception that now the Soviets were setting preconditions for another summit, preconditions that appeared to center on a cessation of nuclear testing.

Nuclear Testing and Other Arms Control Issues

General Secretary Gorbachev went into substantial detail explaining his various initiatives extending the Soviet unilateral testing moratorium and calling for a comprehensive test ban treaty. He underscored Soviet willingness to accommodate U.S. concerns on verification and inspection by submitting to an array of controls, including national technical means, bilateral agreements, and "international controls," including onsite or third-country verification.

Gorbachev also explained his position on intermediate-range nuclear missiles, noting that even here he had altered previous Soviet positions in response to U.S. and allied opposition, and dropped all reference to the inclusion of British and French forces on condition that they not be increased while United States-Soviet forces were "moving toward equalization." Now, he complained, he was hearing new arguments, that these proposals put U.S. allies in a diffi-

cult position and did not deal with Soviet superiority in conventional arms.

Both Congressmen disputed these assertions, emphasizing that the U.S. side had not rejected Gorbachev's proposals. Stressing that he was not in Moscow as an official U.S. arms control negotiator, Chairman Fascell emphasized his hope that both the United States and the Soviets would leave as much flexibility for their negotiator as possible and not paint themselves into corners. On nuclear testing issues, as with other arms control issues, he believed that a gradual phase-by-phase approach, as opposed to a quick fix was the only realistic solution. He thanked Secretary Gorbachev for adding clarification to the Soviet position on testing, since before his visit, he had the impression that the Soviets were not going to a summit unless they had an agreement on testing in hand. Now he was relieved to know that no preconditions were being imposed and that the Soviets were content to allow the negotiating process on testing issues to unfold gradually. As a useful first step, Representative Fascell suggested that Gorbachev accept President Reagan's invitation to send experts to witness U.S. nuclear explosions.

Representative Broomfield suggested that one area ripe for agreement was verification and suggested a meeting of experts from both sides to see if a mutually acceptable verification and inspection regime might be helpful. Secretary Gorbachev countered that such an experts meeting should discuss both a comprehensive test ban and verification. He also rejected Mr. Fascell's suggestion claiming that the Soviet Union was against all nuclear testing and that to send Soviet experts to witness such tests would be insulting to his country and to himself.

Human Rights

Shifting the discussion to the human rights sphere, Representative Fascell told Secretary Gorbachev that the talks the delegation had conducted with Deputy Procurator Naydenov had been very informative and that as a result the congressmen had a much better understanding of the laws and cultural background which seemed to determine Soviet behavior in the human rights area. Chairman Fascell, supported by Representative Broomfield, wanted Secretary Gorbachev to appreciate the significance respect for human rights has for the United States and emphasized to him that the treatment of specific human rights cases significantly affects the attitude of the American people toward the Soviet Union and consequently the overall atmosphere in our bilateral relations. When the Soviet Union denied people the right to emigrate to be with their families or sent others to prison or exile, such actions were viewed in the West as human tragedies, even though the Soviets themselves might consider such actions defensible.

Mr. Fascell reminded Gorbachev that the delegation had made a specific request to visit Andrei Sakharov, either in Moscow or in Gorky, but had received no answer. Fascell noted that Sakharov is considered a hero outside the Soviet Union and perhaps inside as well. He has never been charged with a crime and is still a member of the Academy of Sciences. His was a case that people found easy to identify with, because his treatment appeared so un-

justified. Fascell also informed Gorbachev that during its various meetings in the Soviet Union, his delegation had raised specific cases and hoped that it would receive specific responses on each of them. Representative Broomfield reiterated the importance of human rights issues for large segments of the American people and Mr. Fascell carefully explained to Gorbachev that the United States was not seeking to use human rights issues as a means of undermining the Soviet system. On the contrary, Fascell emphasized, favorable action on human rights cases would not adversely affect the Soviet system and could have a very positive effect on our bilateral relations. In response to Gorbachev's jibe that the delegation could go out and tell the press that they discussed Sakharov and human rights with him for 30 minutes and had received "a calm hearing," Fascell responded that he was not interested in making favorable press impressions, but in making real substantive progress in human rights issues.

In response, Gorbachev asked why the United States was only interested in human rights violations in the socialist countries and the Soviet Union, and was oblivious to other countries' human rights abuses, including its own. Chairman Fascell answered that this contention was incorrect and cited congressional initiatives linking human rights to foreign aid and various congressional reports on the human rights problems in other nonsocialist, in some cases, even allied countries. Responding to Gorbachev's skeptical reaction, he also told him that the Congressional Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe had issued a report in 1979 on domestic U.S. compliance with the Helsinki Final Act, using as a point of departure criticism of the United States which had been voiced by the Soviet Union and other countries. If Gorbachev wanted to take his case directly to the American people, Fascell urged him to come to the United States and appear on television and talk to the people. He also expressed the hope that the American President would be allowed to do the same in the Soviet Union.

Improving the Bilateral Relationship

After this extensive discussion on human rights, Gorbachev asked to get back to what he considered the basic question: How to improve bilateral relations. For this he claimed there could be no illusions on either side, only a mutual recognition of the realities that both the United States and the Soviet Union had legitimate interests, both had a leading role to play in the world, and that no global problem could be solved without either. If the peaceful intentions of the Soviet Union were deliberately interpreted—as had been done recently—as signs of weakness, there could be no progress. As an example he cited a recent congressional study which had reached the erroneous conclusion that the Soviet Union now wants disarmament because it needs resources in other sectors of the economy, and consequently can be pushed into making military concessions. If the United States was seeking unilateral advantages, this would not happen, he warned. Chairman Fascell responded that he believed such views to be unrealistic and asked Gorbachev himself to be realistic. While there was support for a test ban in the United States, it was not overwhelming, and not ev-

eryone was against SDI either. What was needed to advance our bilateral relationship was a real agreement on verification and an agreement on significant reductions of missiles and warheads. Until such deep reductions were forthcoming, it was unrealistic to expect a comprehensive test ban, because there would always be the question of maintaining nuclear capability out of military necessity. Gorbachev responded by defending his invitation to President Reagan to discuss a testing moratorium, rejecting the claim it was merely a propaganda move. Why, he asked, didn't anyone in the United States try to call his bluff by challenging him and accepting the moratorium?

Chairman Fascell emphasized that he wanted General Secretary Gorbachev to know, that although he came from the opposing party, he was convinced that President Reagan was sincere in wanting to reduce tensions and in wanting major agreements to halt the arms race. Mr. Fascell stressed that many in the United States were optimistic because they perceived an opening in United States-Soviet relations which had not existed before and might not exist again for a long time. Now, he urged, was the time for decisive movement in arms control and other important bilateral issues.

Gorbachev concluded by stressing that these kinds of problems had to be thought through together in order for both sides to obtain a better mutual understanding and a "normalization" of relations. What was needed was a major step, not merely an exchange of courtesies. The arms race could not be permitted to continue, and both sides should work to avoid confrontation—particularly military confrontation. Gorbachev added that regarding human rights, the Soviet Union was committed to solving these problems. It had after all, not signed the Helsinki Accords under duress. His country, he claimed, attached as much importance to human rights as the United States did. All human rights problems are examined in the Soviet Union; perhaps some actions are not taken, but what is done, is done in accordance with Soviet law. Any human rights communication the United States sends, Gorbachev added, "will be carefully considered."

CONCLUSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

The visit was a success to the extent that full and businesslike discussions were held with appropriate Soviet politicians, particularly with General Secretary Gorbachev. The delegation was disappointed, however, that the request to see Dr. Andrei Sakharov was never answered and regretted that in the time elapsed since the visit the many humanitarian cases discussed with the Soviets have not been resolved even to a minimal extent.

In addition, the delegation—which was supposedly coinvited by Politburo Member Yegor Ligachev in his capacity as chairman of one of the Foreign Affairs Commissions of the Supreme Soviet—was surprised and disappointed that Mr. Ligachev did not meet with them after they had accepted the invitation.

The delegation was satisfied, however, with the reception and hospitality they received from the Soviet side and appreciated the candid and thorough discussions which were held with their Soviet interlocutors.

On the substantive side the delegation was impressed with the apparent determination by the Gorbachev team to move the economy forward. The Soviet leaders with whom the delegation met uniformly expressed their opinion that changes must be made in the economic system in order to bring about revitalization. Frequent references were made to the use of "incentives" to increase productivity and the need for heavy infusions of capital and technology into the industrial sector. Several Soviet leaders indicated that they understood the need to produce higher quality goods, recognizing that increased productivity would be meaningless unless there were great improvements in the quality and diversity of consumer goods.

Exactly how these changes would occur was somewhat unclear except for the crackdown on drinking, corruption, and mismanagement. These things are obviously already being done, but they could, at best, have only a marginal impact on the economy. Even the Soviets admitted that such reforms could only stop the slide but wouldn't produce great improvements on their own. What did come through was that there must be—and would be—structural changes involving incentives, more local autonomy, more freedom for managers at the enterprise level, acquisition of Western technology and expertise, and less control from the Central Government. On the latter point, however, there was an obvious reluctance to promise too much, and thinly veiled references were made to "resistance" from some quarters.

The major theme which came through—constantly—was the need to shift resources from the military to the civilian side of the economic ledger. This flat statement, however, was always accompanied by an appeal for stopping the arms race, banning nuclear testing, and reducing military expenditures under a negotiated

plan. There seemed to be almost—but not quite—an admission or near admission on the part of the Soviets that they couldn't afford to maintain their military activities throughout the world at current expanding levels and still hope to find the resources to rebuild their domestic economy. At the same time, General Secretary Gorbachev was quick to point out that the Soviet Union would never allow itself to become militarily inferior to the West to the point of vulnerability and would—if necessary—drastically cut the standard of living of its own people in order to maintain its defenses at a safe level.

The delegation concluded that the economy is in serious trouble all across the board, that the new leadership recognizes how critical their problems are at the present moment, and that they can get a lot worse unless drastic steps are taken to turn the economy around, including some basic changes in the system itself.

Resistance to change will come—and is already coming—from the entrenched bureaucracies of the Government and the Communist Party at virtually every level, even though Gorbachev and his allies appear to be firmly in control of the vital organs of both party and government. Sweeping changes are needed in the personnel system of both, and Gorbachev appears to be positioning himself to make the changes he considered to be absolutely crucial to his plans for reform and revitalization.

The role of the military establishment was not clear. The delegation request for a meeting with Lev Zaikov, the apparent No. 3 man in the Politburo, who reportedly oversees the vast defense-related industrial establishment, was not met although there seems to have been an effort made to arrange it. In several meetings, however, there was an obvious sensitivity about the military even though there was universal agreement that resources *must* be shifted from the military to the civilian side of the economy. The delegation concluded that the sensitivity probably stemmed from the fact that the military had their own ideas about such things and were resisting these new ideas at every turn. From a purely speculative perspective, the delegation perceived an underlying theme throughout the discussions that Gorbachev, despite his protests to the contrary, needs arms control agreements, arms reductions, and bans on testing of nuclear weapons and defensive systems in space in order to convince the military to give up some of their resources to the civilian side of the economy. Whether this is true or not remains to be seen, but the arguments put forward by the Soviet side seemed sincere and were rather convincing. Mr. Gorbachev, at least, appeared to be sincere about what he was saying, and what he was saying was consistent with what the delegation heard from other Soviets. It was also consistent with the opinions of many Americans who are close observers of the Soviet scene.

One of the striking things about the delegation's meeting with Mr. Gorbachev was that he did not seem to comprehend the dynamics of the American political and governmental system. In other words, if he had a weakness, it appeared to be that he did not know what he did not know. His references to statements in the American press, in the Congress, and from various experts and think tanks gave the delegation the distinct impression that he did

not understand the political/governmental system of the United States and how it works. Some of the General Secretary's statements implied that the United States was a monolithic society controlled by a vague combination of Wall Street bankers, right-wing ideologies, and influential inhabitants of the military/industrial complex. He also seemed to think that the American press was orchestrated (as is theirs) by some political power center controlled from on high by the Reagan administration that could be turned off and on and manipulated at will. It is clear, therefore, that—despite the General Secretary's good intentions and determination—he is hampered by a lack of experience in foreign affairs and a lack of personal knowledge about the United States. He is almost totally dependent on the small group of foreign policy advisors and American specialists who are all vying for his favor and attention. Unfortunately, his lack of foreign policy experience and his advisors' desire to please him may well mean that they are telling him only what they think he wants to hear, and what he wants to hear is a confirmation of the party line he has been loyally supporting for 30 years.

On the human rights side, the picture was not very encouraging even though discussions about the subject were lengthy and specific. The delegation noted the presence of Deputy Minister of the Interior Trushin at the first meeting in the Kremlin and his willingness to accept the list presented by the delegation with a promise to look into them. The result was a 5½-hour discussion of the list with the Deputy Procurator-General of the U.S.S.R. a few days later. Unfortunately, despite assurances of reconsideration, none of the cases have been resolved. It must be noted, however, that the subject of human rights was raised in every meeting and discussed rather thoroughly without the usual polemics. The Soviets seem to accept the fact that U.S. delegations are always going to raise these questions and are prepared to discuss the subject, albeit reluctantly and usually without result. The sensitivity, however, is still apparent, and if there is any single bit of advice the delegation would want to pass on to subsequent congressional visitors it would be to continue to convey to the Soviets that U.S. concern about human rights questions is real, it is universal, it is a matter of deep conviction, and it is not going to go away. The delegation took every opportunity to make that point and to make it as forcefully as possible. Time can only tell whether or not the Soviets got the message, but they have certainly been assured that the message will continue to be delivered until they do. That is not to say that the delegation delivered any ultimatums or demands; the message was simply stated—that improved bilateral relations, trade and industrial cooperation, and even arms control agreements (which require public support) are all dependent to a significant degree on progress in human rights and emigration for the purposes of binational marriage and family reunification. The Soviets conveyed the impression, although they did not give any specific commitments, that they understood American concerns in this area and that they would address those concerns in the not too distant future. How or whether they will do so is probably the subject of internal debate in the Kremlin on a regular basis.

The delegation was extremely pleased with the reception given them by the Soviets. Although not all of the requests for meetings with high-level officials were met, the discussions with the General Secretary and with Mr. Soloviev, Mr. Gostev, and Mr. Aristov, as well as with Mr. Naydenov and the Members of the Supreme Soviet were more than satisfactory. While the discussions were frank and businesslike, they were also lengthy and thorough and took place in a cordial and friendly atmosphere. Both sides agreed that contacts between Members of Congress and Soviet political leaders are useful and necessary. There were several discussions about the manner in which these contacts could take place on a regular basis. The delegation indicated that the Foreign Affairs Committee, in consultation with the House leadership, was fully prepared to work out ways and means to ensure that such contacts and discussions continue in the future.

One thing is certain, the Soviet Union is undergoing a rapid change of leadership at all levels and is considering drastic changes in their economic system. The new leaders are pragmatic, dynamic, and determined. Many of them are skilled technocrats and experienced managers whose talents are being recognized and pushed to the fore. They know their economic system has not and is not working and seem fully prepared to do whatever is necessary to turn it around, including deep cuts in military spending. If they are successful, the United States will face a rival superpower far more formidable than the Soviet Union of today. Whether, as Margaret Thatcher said, "we can do business with Mr. Gorbachev" or not, remains to be seen. Certainly we have an obligation to try and, from what this delegation observed, the time seems to be ripe.

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